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RE-ENTRY PROGRAMMING DEMONSTRATES SUCCESS

Michigan continues to be a national leader in re-entry policy. The Michigan Department of Corrections implemented the program in 2004 and now it covers the entire state through 18 community service areas. Some recent examples of offender success support the need for the program.

Barry County Remains Focused on the Mission

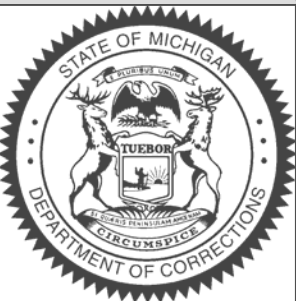
In a recent case, an MPRI parolee (we'll call him Mr. V for this story) discharged from parole on December 31, 2010. This achievement shocked the local sheriff's department and many who knew the offender.

This man began his sentence in 2002 for Home Invasion. During the subsequent years, he paroled three times, in 2004, 2005 and 2007. After his last parole, he absconded on at least six occasions. To his credit, he never picked up a new felony or assaultive misdemeanor, but his inability to report to his agent on a timely basis was a significant challenge. It was once stated in a parole violation report that, "MDOC has tried many approaches to supervising Mr. V., to no avail. He has made it clear that he does not want to participate in the parole process through his actions over and over again."

Following his last abscond and continuation, Mr. V. was again a recipient of MPRI services. His agent, Cindy Hamlin of the Barry County Parole and Probation Office, assigned him to do community service work, which is the local practice for MPRI parolees. Agent Hamlin suggested that he participate in a county-wide graffiti clean up along with several other MPRI parolees, agents and MPRI personnel. During this work detail, Mr. V. and another Barry County parolee were allowed to operate the Nashville Fire Department's water hose in an effort to complete the clean up of the Nashville water tower. This experience became an unexpected, life-changing event for the offender.

The parolees who participated in the county-wide clean up did not stop talking about the work for months. They expressed a sense of pride in their efforts. Surprisingly, they also expressed a commitment to monitoring the behavior of other community members in an effort to control new graffiti displays in the areas that they had cleaned and painted. Mr. V. was very expressive about how enjoyable the experience was for him. To everyone's surprise, he successfully completed the remaining five months of his parole without another

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parole violation for absconding.

In the past, either he never made it to a parole office upon release from prison or re-entry programs, or he reported for a maximum of two months and disappeared until arrested on an absconder warrant. After the community service work, he reported regularly and achieved his long coming discharge from parole in December of 2010.

When asked at a local computer-based training session for an example of success related to cognitive and Evidence-Based



Practices, Mr. V.'s situation was shared by Barry County Parole Agent Michelle Newton. Many of the participants at this training were from the Barry County Jail. All of them were shocked to hear that Mr. V. had finally obtained his discharge. They were well aware of his record and reputation. This information led to an interesting series of statements from the group. Some indicated that he just conformed to get the discharge; others argued that he could have done that all along, but something made a difference.

It is clearly through success stories such as this, that buy-in to MPRI and evidence-based practices from local law enforcement and community members becomes possible. Congratulations are in order not only for Mr. V., but also for the agents in Barry County. These agents, along with our MPRI program personnel, continued to work with him, not giving up and finally creating new opportunities to foster his success.

Kalamazoo County Offers Employment and Housing Stability

In another success story, Parolee B. discharged on March 3, 2011. Parolee B. was an MPRI pa-

rolee who took advantage of all aspects of the program. He attended workforce development at *Michigan Works!* and became employed through AARP at Loaves and Fishes on April 26, 2010. He continues to work there part time. Initially, AARP compensated him for taking computer classes at Kalamazoo Valley Community College (KVCC), and Mr. B. enrolled in KVCC in September 2010, as a full-time student. In addition to working and going to school, Parolee B. successfully completed 18 weeks of substance abuse treatment. Furthermore, there was no evidence of any substance abuse during his parole term. Parolee B. also opted to reside at the Kalamazoo Gospel Mission upon his release from prison instead of relying on family. He wanted to get back on his feet on his own since his family support was not always positive. In June 2010, he obtained a voucher from the Kalamazoo Gospel Mission and was able to secure his own placement on Academy Street in Kalamazoo. After discharging from parole, Parolee B. plans to continue his education and better his life.

Long-Serving Prisoner Finds Success through Following his Love of Writing

Offender J.W. paroled in June in 2010 and is under the supervision of Wayne County Parole Agent Matthew Rummel as a Project Safe Neighborhood parolee. J.W. is serving on 2nd Degree Murder and Assault convictions. He is currently employed at the Michigan Citizen writing articles and serving as a production specialist, and also assists with the editing process. Writing is parolee



J.W.'s passion, but he is determined to engage in positive mentoring. A book that the parolee had published while in prison was recently chosen to be studied by students majoring in Sociol-

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ogy at the University of Wisconsin - Platteville. This book deals with the social implications of the crack epidemic in the United States.

Parolee J.W. was also requested to speak at the University's 2011 Ebony Weekend Conference, a weekend-long educational conference celebrating black culture with keynote addresses, workshops, and poetry. During his address, Parolee J.W. spoke candidly about crime and his experience in prison, which he used as time for

reflection and education. He focused on the need to breakdown stereotypes through education and to learn from past experiences. He was quoted as saying, "Celebrate yourself, acknowledge yourself. Find the courage to step outside the box. No matter what you face in life, it's not how you start, but how you end. There is no obstacle you are incapable of overcoming." Agent Rummel, from Wayne County's Outer District Parole Office, believes that it is Parolee J.W.'s positive attitude with a sense of atonement for his past mistakes that keeps him moving in the right direction.

ACA RE-ACCREDITATION FOR SEVEN MDOC FACILITIES

On January 30, 2011, the annual American Correctional Association's (ACA) Winter Conference took place at the Henry B. Gonzales Convention Center in San Antonio, Texas. During the conference, the Commission on Accreditation for Corrections conducted panel hearings to grant ACA accreditation and re-accreditation to correctional facilities across the country.



The Alamo in San Antonio, Texas

At this year's annual conference, seven Michigan facilities went in front of the four-member panel of commissioners and were granted re-accreditation status. Those facilities included, Baraga Correctional Facility, Alger Correctional Facility, Macomb Correctional Facility, Carson City Correctional Facility, Ernest C. Brooks Correctional Facility, West Shoreline Correctional Facility and Thumb Correctional Facility.

Those in attendance were current ACA Vice President and former Michigan Department of Corrections Director Patricia Caruso, Warden Robert Napel, Warden Kathy Bauman, Warden

Mary Berghuis, Warden David Bergh, A/Warden Randall Haas, A/Warden Tony Trierweiler, and ACA Coordinator Mike Whitford.

Congratulations to all the staff working at these facilities. ACA accreditation is not easy to achieve, taking a collaborative effort on many levels from all involved staff. Congratulations to these facilities!



L to R: A/Warden Tony Trierweiler, A/Warden Randall Haas, Warden Catherine Bauman, Warden Robert Napel, Warden Mary Berghuis, and ACA Coordinator Michael Whitford.



KERYX PROGRAM IS LIFE-CHANGING FOR OFFENDERS AND STAFF

BY SANDI HOPPOUGH

Throughout my career, I have carried the notion that for offenders, or anyone for that matter, to succeed in life, there needs to be a healthy balance for that person in these four areas: social (relationships), physical, psychological (mental/emotional), and spiritual. At The Tuscola Residential Re-entry Program (TRRP), we have attempted to address these areas in the context of reentry. TRRP houses up to 161 parolees who arrive directly from prison as a condition of their parole, or from the community via the parole violation process. The population primarily consists of offenders who have had domestic violence behavior in their past or present.

I first heard of the Keryx program in 2007 from a parolee who had participated while incarcerated some time prior to being discharged to TRRP. It wasn't until a year later that the research began and quickly turned into a mission to bring Keryx to TRRP. Keryx can be described as an intense, spiritual experience. The prison-based program includes an element of "aftercare" via prisoners holding their own accountability groups with community volunteer participation. As TRRP offenders are housed a much shorter time, up to 120 days, the local community Keryx leaders had to approach their board with a request to develop and pilot a hybrid version of the program that focused on the reentry aspect. Lo and behold, the birth of Keryx ReEntry Retreat (KRR) #1 in October 2009. The objective of KRR is to help parolees examine their life goals and through Christian principals, equip them with ideas and tools to help them succeed when they leave TRRP.

Since then we have had two more weekends. With each, about 42 parolees enter as volunteer participants. About the same number of community volunteers are cleared to come in to run the program from Thursday night to Sunday afternoon. Parolees who went through a weekend in prison are asked to volunteer to help as well. One of the community volunteers has had an enormous impact. He spent nearly 30 years in the system,

most of which was in prison. During this ex-offender's presentation, he basically bares his soul to prove to them that he who had been involved in many egregious acts—his crimes and his manipulative behaviors while incarcerated, including signing up for Keryx for the wrong reasons—was able to turn his life around. . .attributing his change to the spiritual foundation Keryx provided.

Here is a letter from one of our parolees who recently attended:

On October 14, 2010, I attended Keryx ReEntry Retreat #3. Having low expectations, I was wonderfully consumed by the events of the weekend. I am writing this letter to express that out of all my experiences in MDOC, there are very few good ones. This experience has profoundly affected me.

I was expecting another lackluster program, as I have attended some 16 MDOC sponsored self-help classes, i.e., Cage Your Rage, Thinking for a Change, etc. The volunteers walked in with open arms and open hearts, but I looked at them as I looked at other Christians. "Is this just another joke? Here we go again, a bunch of do-gooders coming in to change the world."

As I got to know the volunteers in the program, I saw the unselfishness and the sincerity with no judgment, only a group of men that wanted nothing from me. No falsehoods; no lies. I've never met men like this group before. They were incredible! As the weekend progressed, I (along with many fellow inmates, especially the few guys that were in there to kill time and to make jokes and be disruptive to anyone and everything in the program) was systematically consumed and transformed. I've seen guys go from no faith to little faith, hardened criminals' hearts softened and eyes opened.

In my some 12 years of incarceration, I need to express, not sure I can fully express, the total

KERYX TRAINING (Continued on page 5)

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transformation that consumed me and many others in the retreat. The weekend was incredible? It consumed me and changed me forever.

As a repeat criminal, I have gone through all the programs in the MDOC, jumped through the hoops of the programs and got nothing out of them. If you could expand the Keryx program of this weekend, I can see less criminal activity, less violent behavior from inmates towards other inmates; and when entering society, not coming out with a blackened heart, but knowing that there is love and understanding and a chance for me in this world. Thank you sincerely, Charles, KRR#3, Table of Paul.

As manager over TRRP, KRR has been life changing for me as well. It brings great joy to see the outcomes of this program. Although our statistics are informal, for the 120+ offenders having gone through KRR, only a handful have been re-arrested and/or returned to prison. I am grateful to our community partners for their unconditional commitment to bringing this faith-based program to TRRP. I am also grateful for the support and commitment of TRRP staff. Because of everyone's support, we are looking forward to holding KRR #4 in May and KRR #5 in October!!

Sandi Hoppough is an MPRI Manager with the Michigan Department of Corrections, Office of Parole and Probation Services and oversees the Tuscola Residential Re-entry Program.

MARCH IS PARENTING AWARENESS MONTH

March is Parenting Awareness Month, a Michigan campaign to promote effective parenting, the foundation for guiding children and youth to be healthy and drug-free, and to promote resources for parents.

One helpful resource for parents is Parenting Awareness Michigan (PAM), a year round statewide initiative. The mission of PAM is to promote parenting awareness education and resources. PAM distributes a "Parenting Awareness Michigan Packet," a tool-kit that includes free reproducible parenting resources covering topics such as:

- Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs
 - "Tips for Parents to Avoid Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Problems in Children"
 - "What Families Can Do To Help Prevent Underage Alcohol Use"
 - Additional handouts
- Positive Parenting
 - "Ways to Strengthen Your Family"
 - "10 Steps to Positive Parenting"
 - Additional handouts
- Child Development
 - Infant through Adolescent Development resources
- Other Resources for Parents
 - "How Parents Can Help Their Children Cope with Divorce"
 - "Tips to Get More Veggies and Fruits in Your Diet"
 - Additional handouts



Employees can request the tool-kit and/or learn more, by visiting PAM's Web site at:

<http://www.preventionnetwork.org/PAM>

SMART STRESS MANAGEMENT

Our present day stressors and challenges are not the same as in the past. In this fast-paced age of Smartphones, Wi-Fi, commuting, multi-tasking, etc., you may not even be aware of where your stress is coming from! Even if you *do* know, a bigger challenge is finding the time in a busy schedule to put relaxation practices into place. To manage stress today, you still need the “tried and true” ways to relax, such as vacations and going out for an evening of fun. However, you also need some quick and easy methods to outsmart your stress and reduce your stress level, *right in the midst of your busy day!* Following are several simple exercises that can be done throughout the day, in as little as two minutes:



- Deep breathing: When we are stressed, breathing becomes more rapid and shallow, resulting in increased muscle tension. *Try this*: Stand with legs slightly apart, or sit up straight in your chair, place hands on stomach with elbows out, inhale slowly to a count of five, hold each breath for a count of three, and then exhale to a count of five. Repeat three times and feel the tension go out with each breath.



- Guided Imagery: Remember a time and a place when you felt completely relaxed and at peace. Close your eyes, lean back, relax and visualize yourself there; recall sights, sounds, feelings and smells to make the image as vivid as possible. Stay there until calm. Consider combining with deep breathing.

- Positive Self-Talk: Making your self-talk more positive is a great place to start feeling better. By simply changing the words or messages you give yourself, you can reduce the stress you feel. Pay attention to the words you use to describe a situation or even yourself, and see if you can start replacing negative or stress-inducing words with more positive, neutral or even kinder words.



For additional information on stress reducing techniques and Smart Stress Management sessions that are available to state employees, please contact your Employee Services Program (ESP) at 1-800-521-1377.

SEVERE WEATHER SAFETY

Severe weather can occur at anytime throughout the spring and summer months in Michigan. It is important to be alert and prepared for the possibility of severe weather in your area, including tornados and thunderstorms that contain strong winds and intense lightning.

Preparing for a tornado or thunderstorm:

- Plan ahead. Be sure everyone in your household knows where to go and what to do in case of a tornado or thunderstorm warning.
- Know the safest location for shelter in your home, workplace, and school. Load-bearing walls near the center of the basement or lowest level generally provide the greatest protection.
- Know the location of designated shelter areas in local public facilities, such as schools, shopping centers, and other public buildings.
- Have emergency supplies on hand, including a battery-operated NOAA Weather Radio, flashlight, and a supply of fresh batteries, first-aid kit, water, and cell phone.
- Keep a three-day supply of food on hand. Keep some food in your supply kit that doesn't require refrigeration. For more information on food safety following an emergency, visit www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/poweroutage/needtoknow.asp.
- Make an inventory of household furnishings and other possessions. Supplement it with photographs of each room and keep it in a safe place.
- Sign up to receive text or e-mail alerts from your local media, weather provider or the Weather Channel at www.weather.com.

What to do when a thunderstorm approaches your area:

- Stay tuned to your weather radio or local news station for the latest updates from the National Weather Service or go to the National Weather Service Web site, www.nws.gov.
- Seek safe shelter when you first hear thunder or when you see dark threatening clouds developing overhead or see lightning. To determine the proximity of the severe weather, count the seconds between the time you see lightning and hear thunder. If the time between is less than 30 seconds, ensure you are in a safe location and stay inside until 30 minutes after you last hear thunder or see lightning. Remember, lightning can strike more than 10 miles away from any rainfall.
- If you are boating or swimming, get to land and seek shelter immediately.
- Telephone lines and metal pipes can conduct electricity. Any item plugged into an electrical outlet may cause a hazard during a tornado or thunderstorm. Do not use corded (plug-in) telephones except in an emergency.

What to do when a tornado warning is issued for your area:

- Quickly move to shelter in the basement or lowest floor of a permanent structure.
- In homes and small buildings, go to the basement and get under something sturdy, like a workbench or stairwell. If a basement is not available, go to an interior part of the home on the lowest level. A good rule of thumb is to put as many walls between you and the tornado as possible.
- In schools, hospitals, and public places, move to the designated shelter areas. Interior hallways on the

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2011 BENEFITS FOR LIFE OPEN ENROLLMENT IS MARCH 28 - APRIL 15, 2011

Currently, over half of the State of Michigan's employees have elected to enroll in one or more of the *Benefits for Life* plans, which includes the free Discount Plan. Consistent with 2010, the *Benefits for Life* open enrollment will be conducted online.

Eligible employees are encouraged to visit **www.BenefitsForLife.org** between March 28 and April 15, 2011 to review existing coverage levels or to enroll in new coverages. If you do not have access to the Internet, you can call the *Benefits for Life* toll-free call center at **888-825-8395** to ask questions, obtain information and enroll over the phone.

New for 2011, the WOW employee discount plan previously located on the Civil Service website will now be administered by Abenity. State employees will need to enroll in the Abenity Discount Plan during the upcoming annual *Benefits for Life* open enrollment period in order to have access to the WOW discounts beginning on March 28th.

Beginning on March 28th, visit www.BenefitsforLife.org or call 888-825-8395.

Use the on line enrollment process to:

- Review your existing coverage levels and make changes to your current elections.
- Read about or enroll in the **Accident Plan**, introduced in 2010, without medical questions.*
- Apply for Supplemental Term Life without Medical Questions up to specified limits.*
- Renew or enroll in the FREE discount plan which now includes the WOW discounts.*
- Enroll or update your coverage in the Universal Life or Critical Illness insurance programs.*
- Take advantage of AD&D premiums for as low as 21 cents per pay period.*
- Enroll in the Legal Plan to have attorney fees paid-in-full for most covered matters.*
- Obtain auto and home insurance through Liberty Mutual.*

The 2011 *Benefits for Life* program is an excellent way to obtain discounts, save money, and enhance your family's overall financial protection. For more information please review the materials at www.michigan.gov/employeebenefits. Click on **Voluntary Benefits (Active Employees)** in the left menu.



*Exclusions, limitations and restrictions may apply. For more information, please review the plan documents in the "Reference Center" at www.BenefitsForLife.org and/or any certificates of insurance for complete details.

benefits for life

SEVERE WEATHER (Continued from page 7)

lowest floors are generally best.

- Stay away from windows, doors, and outside walls. Broken glass and wind-blown projectiles cause more injuries and deaths than collapsed buildings. Protect your head with a pillow, blanket, or mattress.
- If you are caught outdoors, a sturdy shelter is the only safe location in a tornado, and if you are boating or swimming, get to land and seek shelter immediately.

After a tornado or thunderstorm:

- Inspect your property and motor vehicles for damage. Write down the date and list the damages for insurance purposes. Check for electrical problems and gas leaks, and report them to the utility company at once.
- Watch out for fallen power lines. Stay out of damaged buildings until you are sure they are safe and will not collapse. Secure your property from further damage or theft.